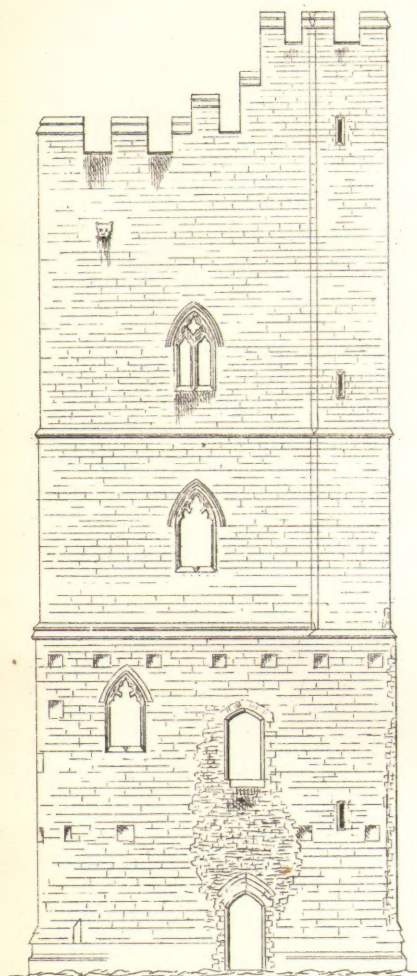
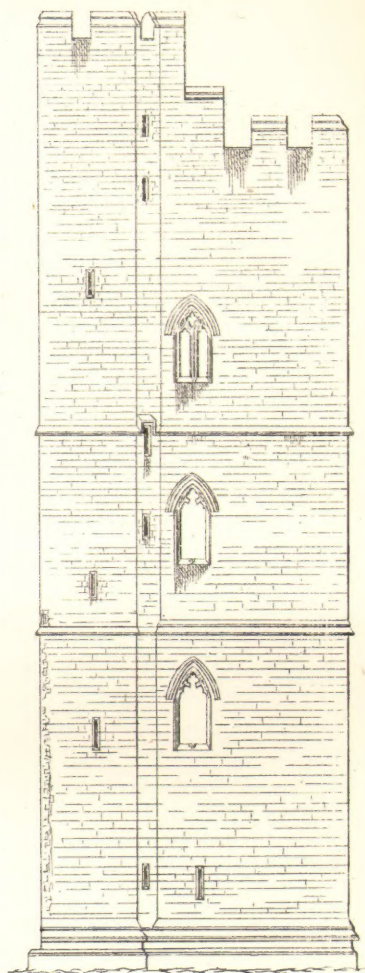


KYME TOWER.

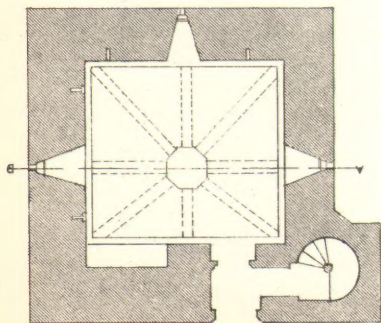
JUNE 1881.



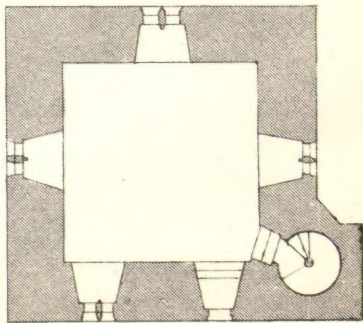
SOUTH ELEVATION.



EAST ELEVATION.



PLAN OF BASEMENT STORY.



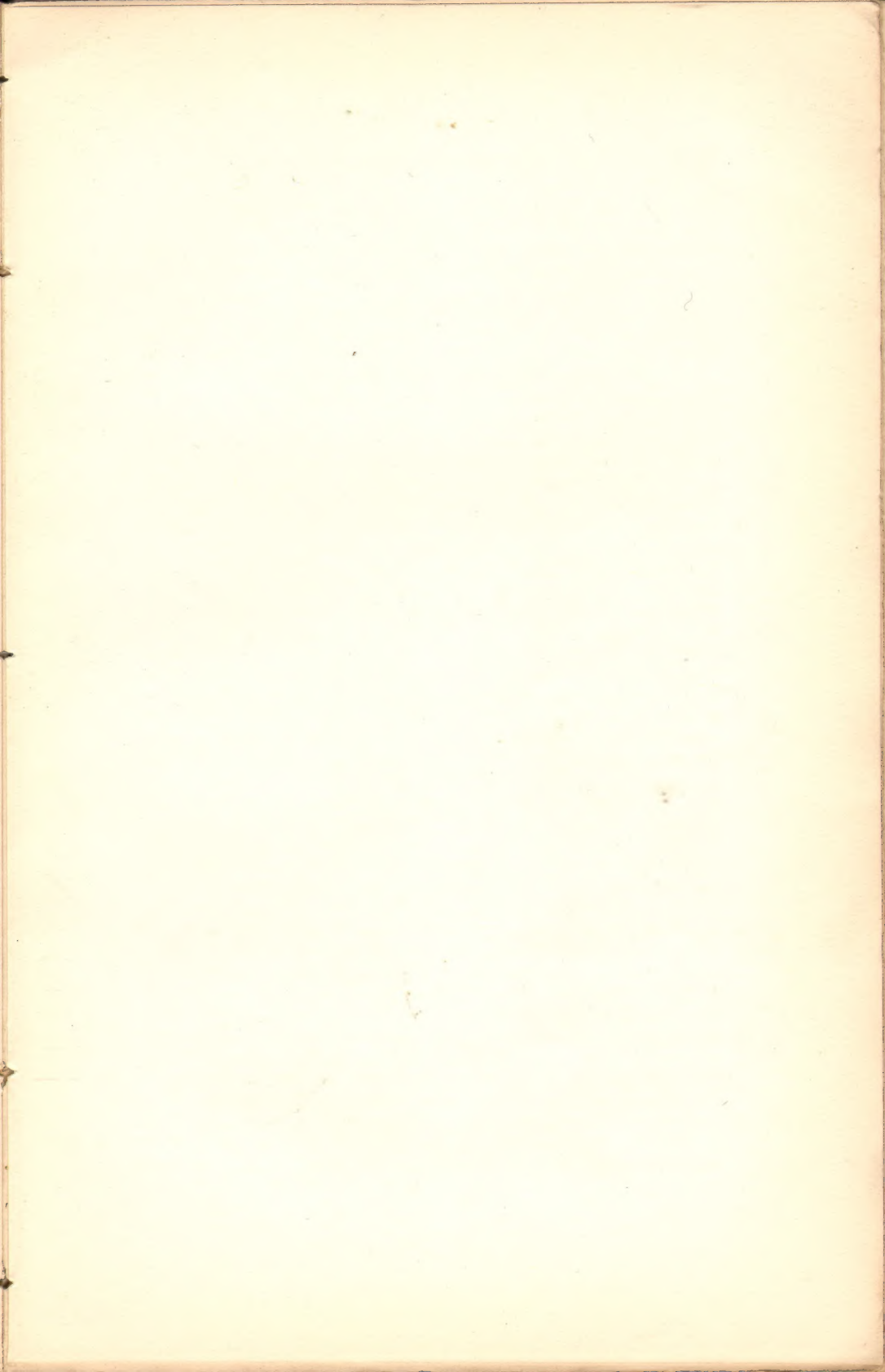
PLAN OF FIRST FLOOR.

Kyme and its Tower.—By CHARLES KIRK, M.A., Architect Sleaford.
A Paper read at the Meeting of the Lincoln Diocesan Architectural Society, at Sleaford.

THE situation of Kyme apart from any of the main lines of communication between the principal towns in its neighbourhood, has caused it to be overlooked. On neither of the previous visits of this Society to Sleaford has it been visited. And yet, there is much of interest both to the Antiquary and the Architect in its history and remains. A glance at the map, which I have prepared, will show what was Kyme at the time of which we have the earliest record. Traces of the Roman occupation remain in the site of a camp, half way between the two villages of North and South Kyme, and the great drainage work of the Romans, the Car Dyke, skirts the parishes for more than a mile. It will be seen that Kyme was then to all intents and purposes an inland island, standing out above the level of the fens. These were at all times of the year soft and miry, growing only a coarse herbage in the summer, and were intersected by dykes in which the reeds and rushes formed covert for the wild-fowl, with here and there a pool or lake fringed with alders and willows, and containing fish in abundance. The land lying between Ewerby and Kyme is still called the *Wathe* or *Where one Wadeth*. In the seasons of rain however these pools and ditches widened and united, and became a sea, across which the inhabitants made their way in boats, made of hollow trunks of trees, some of which have been dug up about the villages of Kyme and Billingham, or in the Skerries or Coracles made of wicker covered with skin or canvass, such as are still used in some parts of Wales and on the West Coast of Ireland. Such a country would be well nigh impassable to troops, quite so, certainly, to the Mail Clad Norman Knights, and we may therefore readily believe the tradition that Kyme was held by the family of that name in Saxon times, and was one of those places never actually surrendered to the Norman Conqueror. But, though he could not reach to subdue it, William did not hesitate to make a grant of the Manor to one of his followers, Gilbert de Gaunt, who had a large slice of Lincolnshire and fixed his residence at Falkingham, which you have visited to-day. At that time it is recorded in *Domesday* that there were "two Churches," probably one at North Kyme and one at South Kyme, served then, as now, by one Priest. There were also two or three hundred acres of wood pasture and coppice wood, and seven hundred acres of marsh, six fish garths and four fisheries. North Kyme now has 3,490 acres and South Kyme 4,862 acres, together 8,352 acres, the larger portion of which must have been under water when the

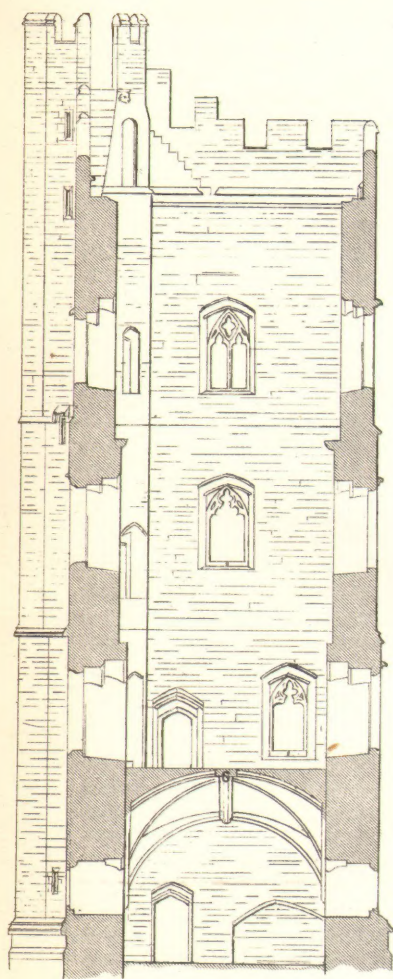
Domesday account was taken. The estates seem to have continued in the hands of their original proprietors, held probably by allodial tenure from the Norman Lords, for we find mention of William de Kyme about 1100, whose son Robert founded the Priory of Bollington and married Rose, daughter of one who is described as Steward to Gilbert de Gaunt. The son of this marriage was Philip, who himself became Steward to the de Gaunt of his time and was High Sheriff of the County in 1168-9. The remains of a Norman church, and the names given to certain fields and houses are still used, as the Boeuferie and the Vacherie, are evidences of Norman influence at work here.

It is not my intention to trace minutely the history of this family of Kyme. That has been done elsewhere, and I do not forget that it is an Architectural Society I am addressing. Suffice it to say, that one was excommunicated by the Pope for siding with the Barons against King John; another was called to Worcester to counsel and aid King Edward I, in his Welsh wars; another was appointed in 1323 one of the custodes, to "guard, and defend, and arm, and array the forces of the County, and to be ready to march against the enemy at three days notice." This was *William* de Kyme, the last of the male line, who died in 1337. His widow Joan, married Nicholas de Cantilupe, and lies buried with him in the Cantilupe Chantry, in Lincoln Cathedral, of which she was the foundress. The estates now passed to the family of Umfravill by the marriage of Gilbert de Umfravill, Earl of Angus, to Lucy de Kyme, sister and heiress of William. It is to this family we owe the erection of the "goodly house" spoken of by Leland, of which the grand tower remains to this day, for on the keystone of the vaulted roof of its lowest story, perfect as when it was first wrought, is a shield, bearing the arms of Umfravill, Gu. a cinquefoil within an orle of crosses *patonce*, or: not cross crosslets as the arms are usually blazoned. The main body of the mansion evidently stood to the south of the tower, and was connected with it by a narrow passage, which was only high enough to reach the first floor. By several indications, I am led to the opinion that this tower was designed as a keep, or ultimate refuge in case of attack. The chamber in the basement is lighted only by narrow loopholes on the three exposed sides. It is the only one that is vaulted, and the arrangement of the doors is such that they were evidently intended to be secured from within. The recess in the wall, on the left of the door as you enter, has been termed a fire-place. But not only is there no mark of fire such as is commonly found in like cases, but there is no flue for the smoke. Similarly the chambers over could only have been temporarily occupied, or must have been warmed by charcoal in brasiers, which could be moved from room to room, as is done still in Italy and Spain, for there

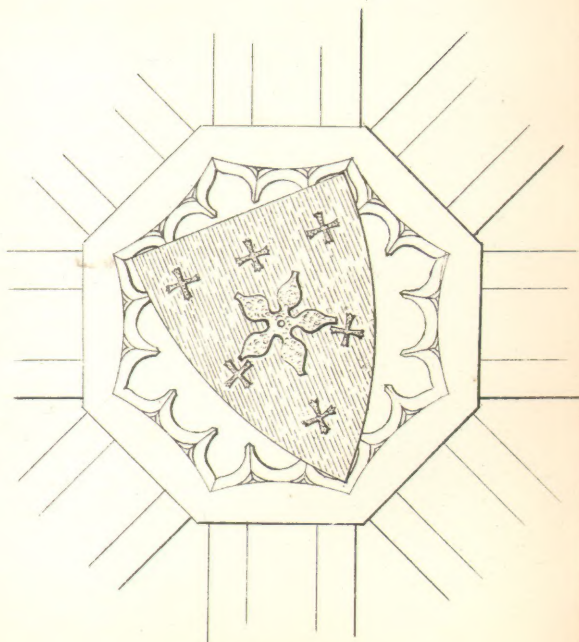


KYME TOWER.

June 1881.



SECTION ON LINE A.B

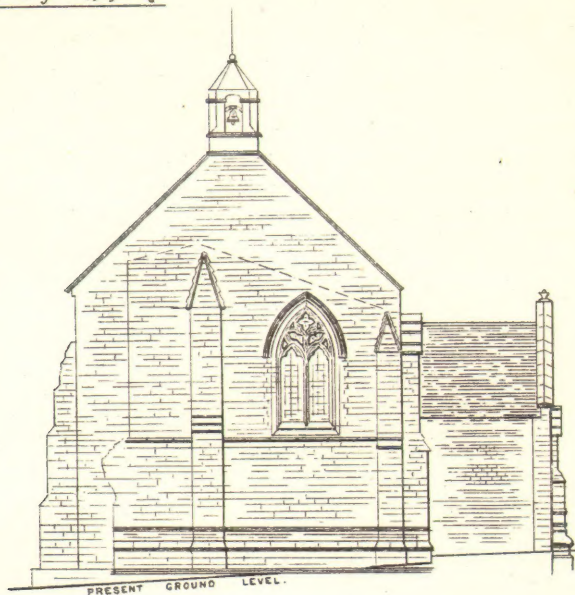


BOSS AT G

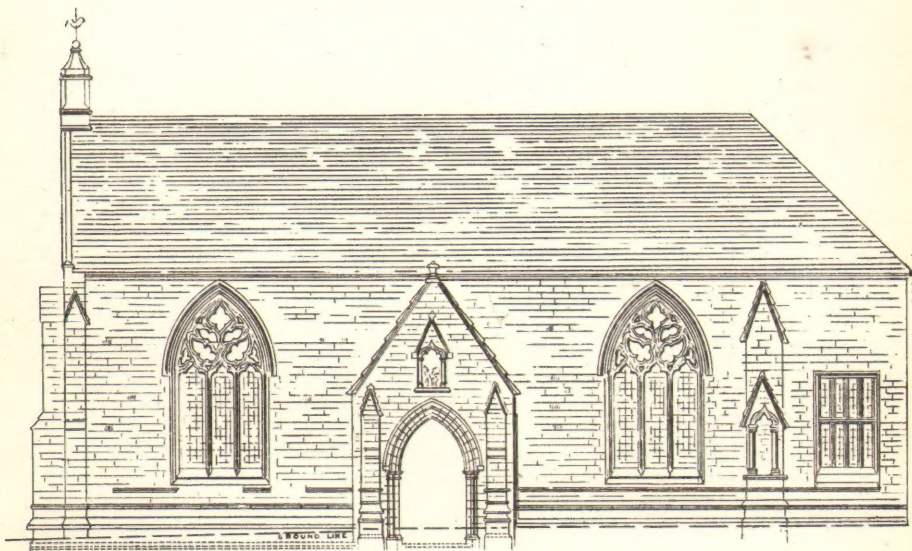
is no fire-place in any, although fire-places are common enough in English edifices of the time. In the top story indeed there is a piece of brick work, which looks as if it might have been the back of a fire-place, but its height from the floor and the absence of marks of fire or smoke, seem to contradict the theory. The windows of the first and second floors, which have traceried heads, had wooden shutters, of which the hooks remain, to close the lower part, but in the tracery of some, there is a groove for glass. Each window was protected by iron bars outside, in the positions of which in the several stories there is a curious variation. Let it be observed that on those faces of the tower on which are the loopholes of the basement story, the windows are placed immediately over the loopholes. The iron guards of the *first* and *third* floor windows were fixed, as is usual with saddle bars in church windows, in the jambs. But in the *second* story, which was out of the reach of spearmen, the guards were fixed on the face of the wall, and doubtless projected from it sufficiently to allow of missiles being dropped through, as was the case in many of the Border Towers in the North. No stone benches are to be found at the sides of any of the windows as was usual in domestic edifices. The turret stair which gives access to the upper rooms is curiously constructed, the steps varying very much in thickness, and not succeeding after all in hitting the right level when the door of the room was reached. The top of this stair, when it has at length risen above the leaded roof of the tower, is beautifully groined with fan tracery, springing from a central shaft of stone, resembling one that some of you may have seen in one of the turrets of the Palace of Linlithgow. The platform at the summit, which was formerly reached by steps from the leaded roof of the tower, but now through a hole formed by removing one of the stones of the vault, forms a splendid watch-tower or beacon-station, commanding a view over all the surrounding country. The grand outline of the Cathedral at Lincoln rises over the woods of Blankney to the north-west, and far away in the opposite direction the stately tower of St. Botolph, at Boston, keeps watch over the great level of the Fens which lie between. The masonry of this tower is wonderfully perfect, and is a fine specimen of the oolite stone of which most of the neighbouring churches are built. The quarries were in a place called Hanbeck, close by Wilsford, in which parish the present quarries are situate, though the produce of them is always called Ancaster stone. The mouldings of the windows and the base of the tower are almost ecclesiastical in character, closely resembling those of the church which is near. The Mansion or Castle, was surrounded by a moat which can still be traced, but the bridge by which it was crossed, in the position marked on the plan, has been removed. Marks of foundations may be seen in the field to the east of the tower, and to the north of the church which we come next to consider.

Of the ancient ones mentioned in *Domesday*, no vestige remains. That at North Kyme has disappeared entirely, but of the Norman one which succeeded that at South Kyme a very fine remnant exists in the inner doorway of the porch of the present church. This must have formed part of a considerable fabric and is very rich in character. The label mould is carved like a cable and has a snake-like head at each termination. Close by this doorway is the remnant of a Holy Water Stoup which seems to be formed out of part of the shaft and the cap of a Norman respond of the same date as the doorway. It is probable that when Philip de Kyme founded the Priory, and dedicated it in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary about 1170, he allowed this Norman church (then less than a hundred years old) to stand, for I have not been able to discover any record or remains of a church built at this period. The details of the beautiful windows of the south aisle seem to indicate that when the Umfravill who built the tower had finished his work there, he proceeded to rebuild the church. The part coloured dark on the plan is all that is left, but from this fragment and the marks of the foundations to the east and north of it, one can form some idea of the size and shape of this grand fabric, which must have been no unworthy rival of the magnificent churches visible from its site. The fragment is nearly one half of the west front of the nave and a large portion of the south aisle. At this point on the west front is part of the jamb of the great west door of the church, and above it is the line of the jamb of the west window. Allowing the usual width for this door, we can construct a plan of this end of the church, and following along the wall of the south aisle eastward till we come to the point marked B, we come to a window which has been defaced, but inside, in its sill, is a piscina, which seems to indicate that there was a chapel at the east end of the south aisle, which probably terminated in the position shewn. As there was clearly no western tower, it is probable that it stood at the intersection of the nave and transepts, foundations of the latter being clearly traceable on the north side. This would throw the chancel still further east, and as a matter of fact, foundations have been disturbed in that direction as far as the point indicated on the plan, as the probable length of the chancel. The line of the roof of the south aisle is visible at the west end, and if the nave was at all in proportion to this, the structure must have been a very noble one. The side walls of the porch have been rebuilt, but the south gable remains and is curious, as, although of the same period of Architecture, the base mouldings are different from those of the aisle, and are at a different level. Above the arch is a niche containing two figures carved out of one stone, said to represent the coronation of the Virgin. On the face of the western buttress of the porch, just above the base mould, is an inscription in characters that may have

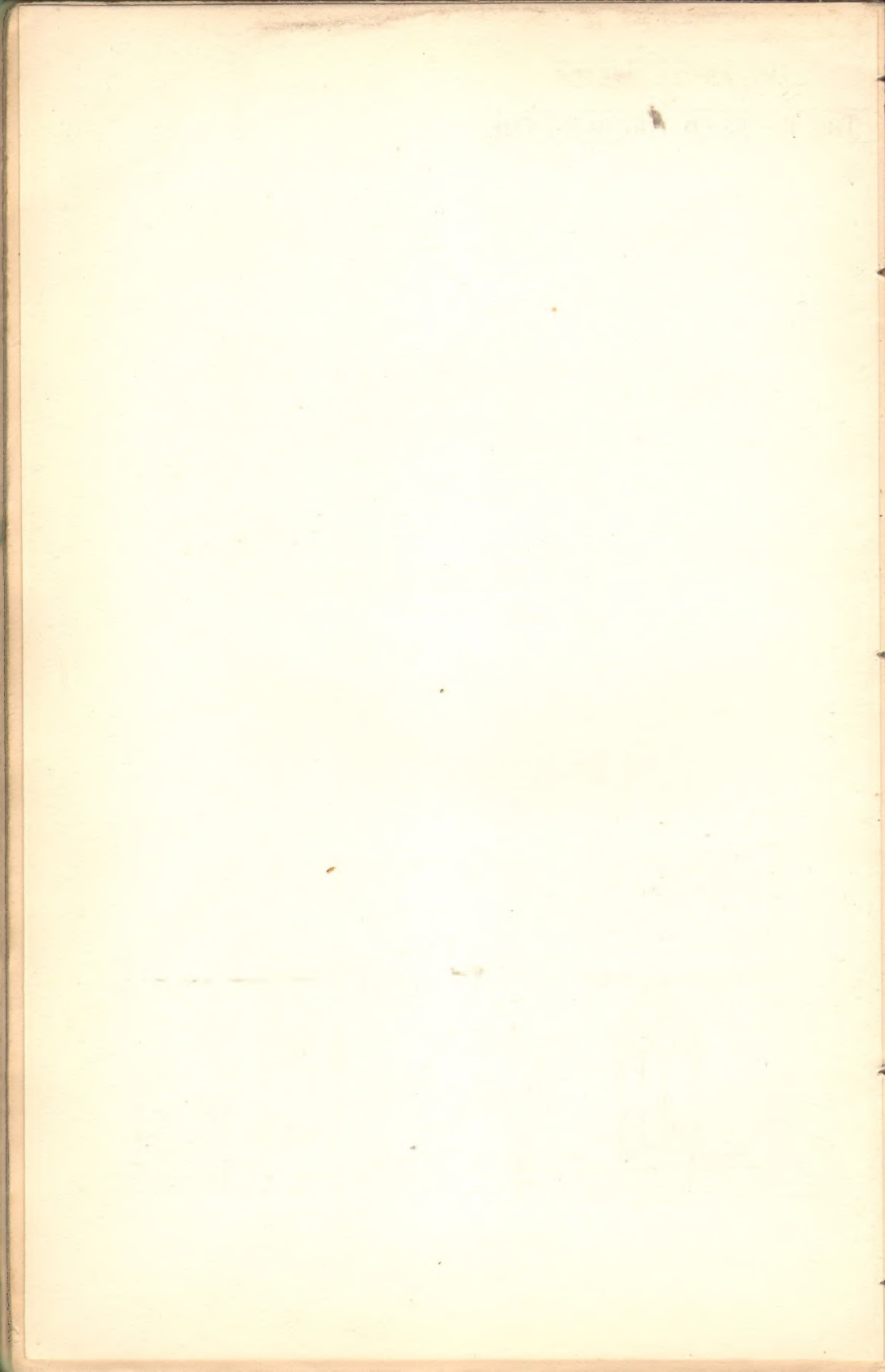
THE PRIORY CHURCH
OF
THE BLESSED VIRGIN. S. KYME.



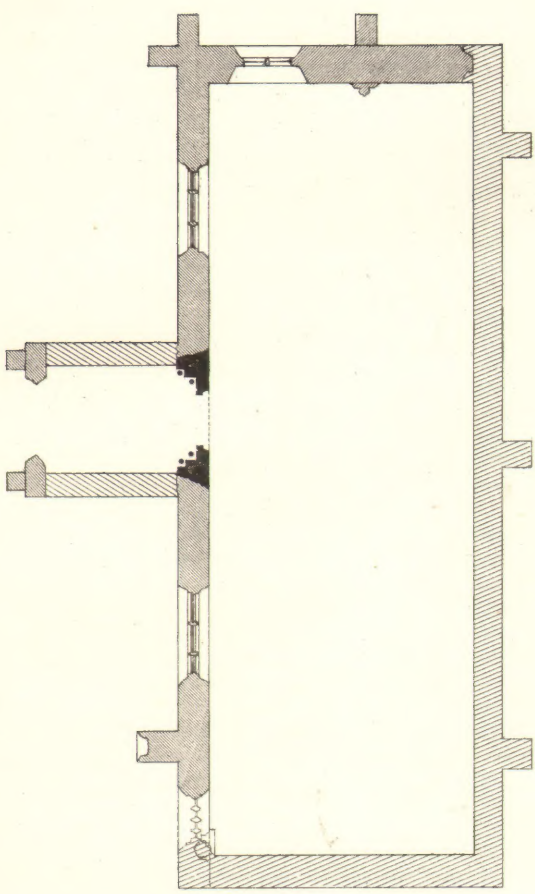
WEST ELEVATION.



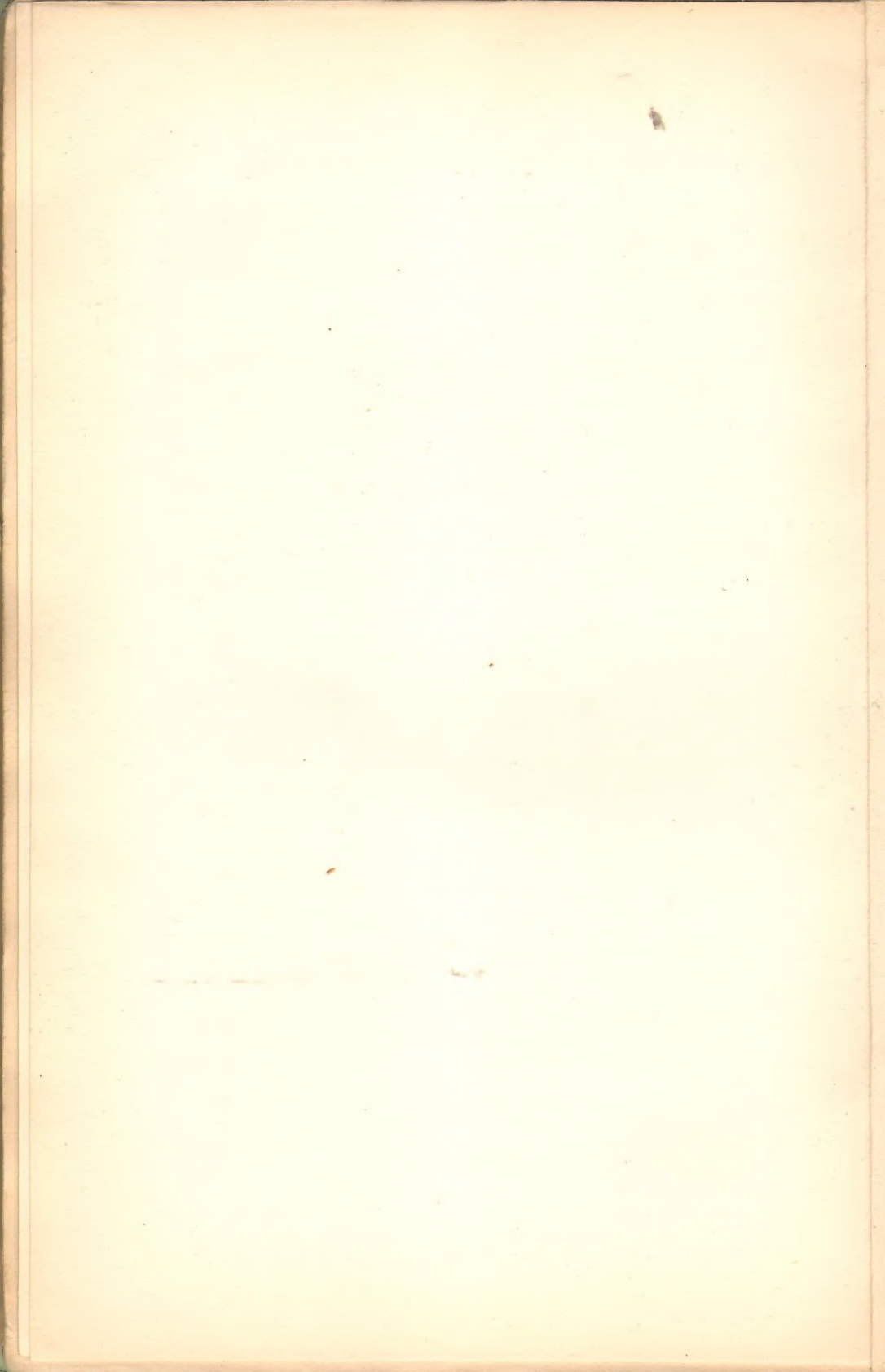
SOUTH ELEVATION.



THE PRIORY CHURCH
OF
THE BLESSED VIRGIN, SKYME.



GROUND PLAN.



been cut at the time of its erection legible with great difficulty now, but given in Bishop Trollope's *History of Sleaford* thus, "Orate pro anima Thomasi Weston hujus prioratus pincerna." There are other curious inscriptions within, all of which are recorded in the same work.

The Umfravills having finished their house and church died out in less than a hundred years, and the Kyme property passed, as it came to them, by marriage with the heiress to Gilbert Burdon and by his daughter and heiress to Henry Talboys, and again by female line and division among the heirs general in 1530, when the head of the Barony of Kyme came to Sir Edward Dymoke, of Scrivelsby. The Dymokes appear to have resided here until about 1700, and the estate was sold, about 1730, to the Duke of Newcastle.

It was afterwards sold to Abraham Hume, Esq., whose son Sir Abraham Hume, Bart., of Wormleybury, Herts, bequeathed it to his second daughter, and the Kyme estate again passed by marriage in 1810, to the Earl Brownlow, of Belton, whose son, the Honourable Charles Henry Cust is the present owner. Those who were present with us at Kyme yesterday will, I am sure, agree with me that the thanks of this Society are due to this gentleman for the care with which he has protected the tower. The open masonry that was once covered by the leaded roofs has been cemented over, so that no wet can enter, and it was not until the last terrible winter that any water found its way through the floor of the "chequer chamber," and the vaulting of the lower story. I have no doubt that if representation of this fact were made to the owner's agent, Mr. Hutchinson, directions would be given for putting a floor of asphalt in place of the chequered pavement which gave the name to the room, and Kyme would be able to boast of its tower for many an age to come.

The Primary Visitation of the Diocese of Lincoln by Bishop Neile, A.D. 1614.—By the REV. PRECENTOR VENABLES.

THOSE who have had occasion to examine the history of Church affairs in the Diocese of Lincoln during the stormy period of the first half of the seventeenth century which ushered in the great Rebellion, and culminated in the temporary overthrow both of the Church and the Monarchy, are only too well aware of the deficiency of the most important class of materials caused by the absence from the Bishop's Registry of the volumes containing the Episcopal Acts of Bishops Neile, Mountain, and Williams. As the loss of these